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CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

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Illinois Department of Public Aid

Title IV-D of the Social Security Act requires that all states have an effective child support enforcement program. The official child support agency for the State of Illinois is the Bureau of Child Support of the Department of Public Aid.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Through the Bureau of Child Support the State of Illinois provides a parent location service which searches state and federal records in an attempt to locate an absent parent whose whereabouts are unknown. In conjunction with law enforcement officials and the court system, the Bureau of Child Support offers a child support enforcement service which:

1) Establishes the paternity of children born out of wedlock;
2) Obtains court orders for child support; and
3) Refers parents who are delinquent in their child support payments to the courts for legal enforcement.

AFDC APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS

If you are applying for or receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children because the children have been deserted or abandoned by one or both parents, you will be required to cooperate with the Illinois Department of Public Aid's child support enforcement program. As a condition of your eligibility for assistance (but not the children's eligibility) you must cooperate with the Department of Public Aid in:

1) Assigning your rights to support for yourself and the children to the Department,
2) Identifying and locating the absent parent(s) of the child(ren),
3) Establishing the paternity of a child born out of wedlock,
4) Mailing child support which you receive from an absent parent to the Department, and

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5) Obtaining child support payments or any other payments or property for any person applying for AFDC.

You must cooperate with the family support specialist, your caseworker and any other representative of the child support program. If you are requested to obtain blood tests or to appear in court, your cooperation is a condition of your own eligibility for AFDC. If, for a good reason, you cannot keep your appointment, you are to call the family support specialist before your appointment so other arrangements can be made.

CLAIM FOR EXEMPTION FROM COOPERATION IN OBTAINING CHILD SUPPORT

While it does not affect your children's eligibility, your decision to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement Program directly affects any benefits you personally may be eligible for. If you fail to cooperate, your needs will be excluded from the assistance grant you receive for your children.

According to a recent federal law, if you can show that you did not cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement Program for a good reason, you will not be penalized. However, you are required to provide the Department of Public Aid with the evidence necessary to prove why you cannot cooperate. Or you must present sufficient information to help the Department investigate your situation. This information might include the absent parent's name and address, or other pertinent facts. Upon request, your local public aid office will assist you in obtaining the necessary evidence.

Then the Department will decide whether or not there has been good cause for your non-cooperation. This decision will be made on the basis of evidence you supply, investi-

gation of information you provide, or a combination of both.

You will not have to cooperate in establishing paternity or obtaining support payments for your children if your cooperation might possibly result in:

1) Physical or emotional harm to the children, or
2) Physical or emotional harm to you, which might reduce your ability to care for the children.

You will not be required to cooperate in establishing paternity or obtaining support payments if:

1) The child involved was conceived as a result of forcible rape or incest,
2) Adoption proceedings in court are pending,

CAUSE FOR EXEMPTION
Physical or emotional harm to the child or caretaker relative
Conceived as a result of forcible rape or incest
Adoption proceedings pending
Counseling regarding adoption

3) You are currently being counseled by a public or licensed social agency to decide whether or not you should keep your children. This counseling must not last more than three months.

The above information will be weighed to determine whether your cooperation would be detrimental to the children.

The Department will also determine whether Support Enforcement action without your participation can be taken without risk to you or your children. If so, the Bureau of Child Support will proceed without your participation. The parent will not be contacted by the Department unless necessary to prove your claim. You will be notified prior to an attempted contact so you may present additional evidence or withdraw your application for AFDC.

EVIDENCE
Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, psychological, or law enforcement records which indicate that the absent parent might inflict physical or emotional harm on the child or you; Medical records which include the emotional health history and present emotional health of the child or you; or Written diagnosis or prognosis from a mental health professional indicating the emotional health of the child or you.
Birth certificates, medical or enforcement records which indicate the child was conceived as a result of forcible rape or incest.
Court documents or other records to indicate legal adoption procedures are pending.
Written statement from public or licensed private social agency.

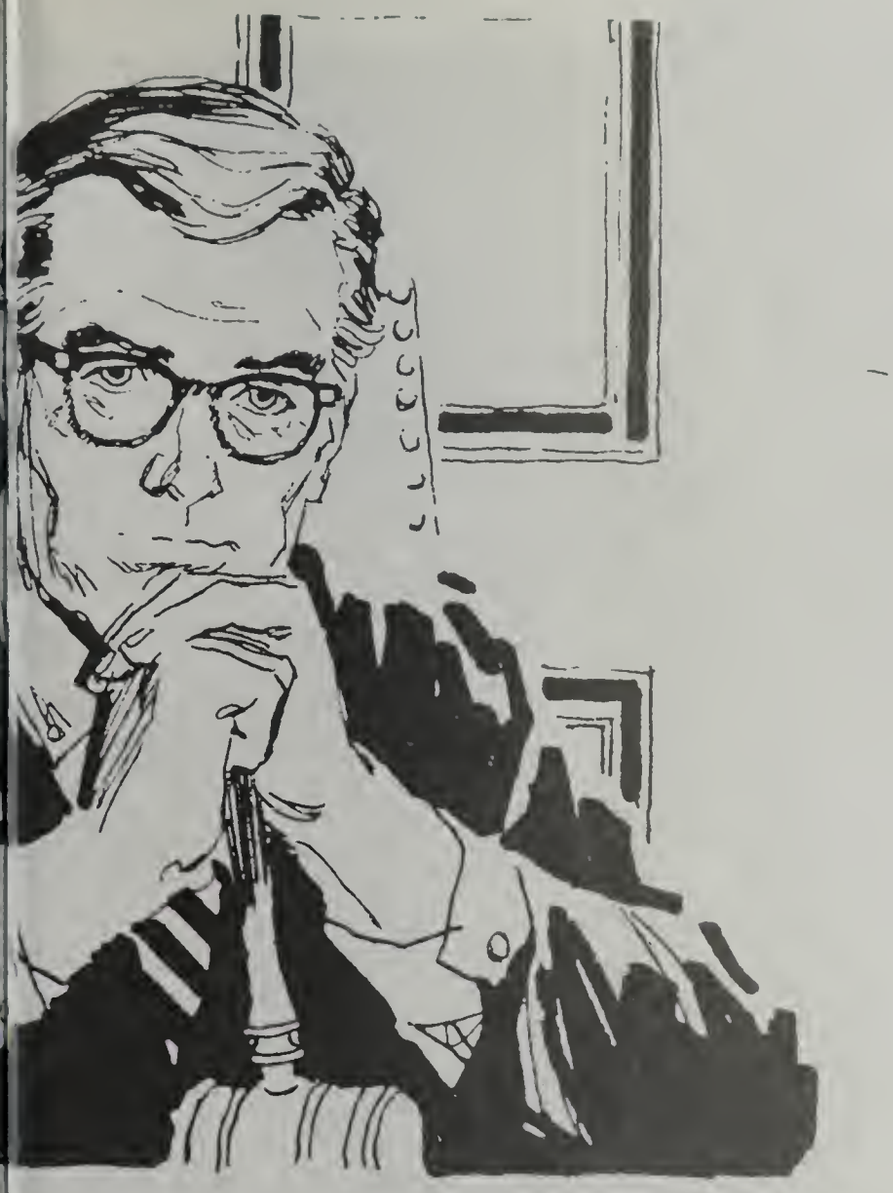
If you do not qualify for an exemption, you must cooperate with the program to remain eligible. The Bureau of Child Support may review the basis for exempting you from cooperation. Then the Bureau may participate in fair hearings concerning the exemption issue.

EVIDENCE

The federal government has set certain standards for establishing good cause for non-cooperation. Refer to the chart at the left for a listing of evidence which does not require further investigation by the Department.

COST OF CHILD SUPPORT LOCATION AND ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

If you are an AFDC recipient, all of these services are provided at no cost. If you are not a public assistance recipient, these services are available for a reasonable fee which is determined by your gross income



nd family size. Contact your local public d office if you desire these services.

you receive child support from an absent arent for a child applying for or receiving FDC, you will receive a reporting form uring the application process and thereafter s necessary. On this form you are to indicate ıe amount of support received, whom it was om and which child(ren) it was for. This ɔrm and all the support received from the bsent parent is to be mailed to: **Direct Pay upport Services, P.O. Box 909, Springfield, linois 62705.**

\ll checks and money orders are to be ndorsed to or made payable to the ILLINOIS EPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AID. Cash is ɔt to be sent. If you do not report this sup-ɔrt promptly and accurately, your case-orker will be notified and your AFDC grant ay be cancelled.]

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